

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1 and 5 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A bus control method for a bus, which is provided with a switch having a plurality of master ports for connecting a plurality of masters and a plurality of slave ports for connecting a plurality of slaves, wherein the switch can ~~connect~~ establish connection paths between each of the plurality of masters ~~to~~ and an arbitrary one of the plurality of slaves for transmitting and receiving a command, an address, and data via the switch, said method comprising:

a read command transaction step in which a first master initiates a read transaction with a first switch request for connecting with a first slave, the switch establishes a first connection path between the first master and the first slave, the first master issues ~~an address and a command~~ a first address and a first read command to the first slave via the first connection path, and the switch releases the first connection path before read return data corresponding to the first address and the first read command is issued from the first slave; and

a read data transaction step in which the first slave issues a second switch request for connecting with the first master after the first connection path is released in the read command transaction step, the switch establishes a second connection path between the first slave and the first master independent from the first connection path made in the read command transaction step, and the first slave issues the read return data to the first master via the second connection path,

wherein, before the read data transaction step is completed, a read command transaction step of a next read transaction can be ~~issued~~ initiated.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Previously Presented) The bus control method according to claim 1, wherein a start signal for initiating the read transaction is used also as a request signal for the switch request for connecting with the slave.

5. (Currently Amended) A bus system comprising:

a plurality of masters;

a plurality of slaves; and

a bus that is provided with a switch,

wherein the switch can ~~connect~~ establish connection paths between each of the plurality of masters and an arbitrary one of the plurality of slaves for transmitting and receiving a command, an address, and data via the switch, in a read transaction which includes a read command transaction and a read data transaction,

wherein, in the read command transaction, a first master initiates the read transaction with a first switch request for connecting with a first slave, the switch establishes a first connection path between the first master and the first slave, the first master issues ~~an address and a command~~ a first address and a first read command to the

first slave via the first connection path, and the switch releases the first connection path before read return data corresponding to the first address and the first read command is issued from the first slave,

wherein, in the read data transaction, the first slave issues a second switch request for connecting with the first master after the first connection path is released in the read command transaction, the switch establishes a second connection path between the first slave and the first master independent from the first connection path made in the read command transaction, and the first slave issues the read return data to the first master via the second connection path, and

wherein, before the read data transaction ~~step~~ is completed, a read command transaction ~~step~~ of a next read transaction can be ~~issued~~ initiated.

6. (Previously Presented) The bus control method according to claim 1, wherein a start signal for initiating data return in the read data transaction step is used also as a request signal for the switch request for connecting with the master.

7. (Previously Presented) The bus control method according to claim 1, wherein the next transaction is a transaction from another master to the slave.

8. (Previously Presented) The bus control method according to claim 1, wherein the next transaction is a transaction from the master to another slave.

9. (Previously Presented) The bus control method according to claim 1, wherein the master issues an identifier of the master with the address and the command to the slave in said read command transaction step, and the slave issues the identifier of the master with the read return data in said read data transaction step.